

UNIVERSITY OF ZIMBABWE

**THE ZIMBABWE BULLETIN
OF TEACHER EDUCATION**

DEPARTMENT OF TEACHER EDUCATION

The Zimbabwe Bulletin of Teacher Education

An official journal of the Department of Teacher Education, University of Zimbabwe

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The Zimbabwe Bulletin of Teacher Education [ISSN:1022-3800] is published two times, one volume of two issues per year by the Department of Teacher Education, University of Zimbabwe.

Subscription Rates

The subscription rates per year and per volume {2 issues} of the journal are as follows. These rates are subject to change without prior notice.

| | Within Zimbabwe | Outside Zimbabwe |
|--------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Individual | Z\$7 000.00 | US\$80.00 |
| Institutions | Z\$8 000.00 | US\$150.00 |

Single copies may be ordered for Z\$3000.00 within Zimbabwe and for US\$150.00 outside Zimbabwe.

The Zimbabwe Bulletin of Teacher Education**ISSN: 1022-3800: Volume12, Issue 2, November 2003**

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The Impact of the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme on Education In Zimbabwe

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The Impact of the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) on Education in Zimbabwe

Abstract

This paper discusses the impact that the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) has had on the education system in Zimbabwe. It contrasts the racially based colonial education system with the democratic one introduced at independence. The paper then shows how the ESAP has adversely affected the quality of the democratic education introduced at independence. The effective re-incarnation of the previously discarded differential education system is explained in the process. The paper uses much historical data to bring out these phenomena.

Preamble

This paper gives an overview of developments in education in Zimbabwe since independence in 1980. This review is made against the background of the economic reforms instituted soon after independence and highlights the impact of economic policies on educational reform. The 1980's was the period during which the crusade for educational reform took a front position in the government's agenda for social and economic re-engineering. The paper highlights some of the significant achievements made during those years.

Secondly, the paper examines the factors responsible for the radical change in educational policy after 1991 and in particular the impact of the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme on Education. Change in education policy is viewed, not as an isolated event but as part of a

broad policy change in the social and economic spheres. The introduction of ESAP in 1991 is shown to have marked the end of the honeymoon period in social and economic reform and the beginning of difficult years to come.

The Historical Background

Formal western educational enterprise began in 1859 with the arrival of European missionaries at Inyathi. More missionaries were to come accompanying Cecil John Rhodes in his crusade to colonise Africa. After the raising of the Union Jack at Fort Salisbury in 1890, more missionaries were to follow. Their primary mission was to evangelise the black people of this part of Southern Africa that was to become Rhodesia.

The defeat of the African inhabitants by the white settlers in the bitter 1896 – 97 war, firmly established white rule. This environment provided missionaries with fertile ground for intensive evangelical work. Both the missionaries and the white settlers shared common goals and vision which were primarily to establish and consolidate white hegemony. The repressive and exploitative tendencies of colonial rule were justified in terms of their role in supporting the christianisation of this part of Africa. Colonial administrators took advantage of missionary support for their exploits to plunder the colony's resources including its people. The mission school was designed not only to facilitate the conversion of Africans to Christianity but also to produce a literate and useful functionary in the emerging white economy.

The curriculum in the mission school comprised the basic rudiments of literacy and numeracy as well as aspects of industrial training. The policy was to ensure that Africans were not educated or trained to a level where they became a threat to the white settlers. Prime Minister Godfrey Huggins (1933 – 52) explained this position quite clearly thus:

The European in this country can be likened to an island of whites in a sea of blacks with the artisan and the tradesman forming the shores and the professional classes the highlands in the centre.

Is the native to be allowed to erode away the shores and gradually attack the highlands? To do so would mean that the leaven of civilisation would be removed in this country (Gray, 1960, p. 236)

This perception of white/black relations was the cornerstone of the philosophy of separate and unequal racial development for which Huggins was better known and it laid the foundations of educational policy. It was a policy that was designed to ensure that Africans and Europeans lived and developed apart from each other. In Huggins's own words, this policy visualised the two races -

--- living side by side yet apart. Each working in his own area, not in competition with each other but complementary to one another as in partnership (United Party, 1940).

In line with this philosophy, two separate systems of education were created; one for Africans and the other one for whites. The curriculum for white education was designed to impart superior skills and knowledge while that for Africans was meant to produce an inferior second-class citizen who would be a source of cheap labour. Keigwin, (1920) an administrator in the Department of Native Affairs tried to allay white fears that colonial and missionary policies on African education threatened white security.

If a critic feels that this education plan will be imperilling both his and the country's labour supply, he should feel assured that our policy, far from decreasing the supply of labour, should increase it both in quality and efficiency and develop simple skills in industries that do not open direct competition to Europeans (Keigwin, 1920; p. 178).

The policy of two separate systems of education, one for blacks and the other for whites remained in force throughout the history of colonial rule. During the first fifty years of white rule, African education was left almost

entirely to the enterprise of missionary churches, while European education was largely the responsibility of government. It was not until 1939 that secondary education became available for Africans at the Anglican mission school of St Augustine near the eastern town of Umtali. Europeans, on the other hand, had long accessed secondary education at several government schools in both urban and rural areas. It was only in 1948 that the first government secondary school for Africans was established at Goromonzi outside the country's capital town of Salisbury (now Harare).

The result of limited opportunities in the African education sector was the low retention rate of pupils between the first year of schooling Sub Standard A (primary) and Form IV (Senior Secondary). Between 1947 and 1960, the following was the trend in school enrolment reduction.

TABLE 1

Wastage in African Schools between 1947 and 1960

| <u>Wastage</u> | <u>Year</u> | <u>Pupils</u> | |
|----------------|-------------|---------------|--------|
| Sub A | 1947 | 81 821 | - |
| Standard II | 1950 | 23 336 | 58 455 |
| Standard VI | 1954 | 4 429 | 18 937 |
| Form II | 1956 | 1 888 | 2 541 |
| Form IV | 1958 | 379 | 1 509 |
| Form VI | 1960 | 15 | 364 |

Source: Keatly, (1963). **Politics of Partnerships: The Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland**. Penguin African Library p. 372

Of the 81 821 pupils who enrolled in Sub-Standard A in 1947, only 4 429 reached Standard 6 which means that by 1954, 77 392 had dropped out during primary schooling.

Of the 1 888 who reached Form II (Junior Secondary) only 379 got to Form IV while a mere 15 reached Form VI (Advanced Level). Put in another way, out of the estimated 85% of African children who entered

primary school in 1947, only 1% reached the tenth year of schooling in 1960.

Disparities in the provision of educational opportunities for Africans and Europeans were glaring. A comparison of the retention rate in African and European education shows this clearly.

TABLE 2

Retention Rates in African and European Schools in 1956

| Grade Enrolment % | African Enrolment % | | European |
|----------------------|---------------------|-------------|----------|
| | <u>Non Govt</u> | <u>Govt</u> | |
| Sub A and B | 56.74 | (43.03) | 25.6 |
| Standard I | 16.83 | (13.96) | 10.6 |
| Standard II | 10.92 | (11.68) | 10.3 |
| Standard III | 7.50 | (8.19) | 9.2 |
| Standard IV | 3.41 | (7.71) | 8.5 |
| Standard V | 2.17 | (4.64) | 8.3 |
| Standard VI | 1.38 | (2.97) | 7.3 |
| Form I | 0.54 | (2.73) | 5.7 |
| Form II | 0.37 | (2.03) | 4.0 |
| Form III | 0.12 | (2.25) | 1.6 |
| Form IV | 0.01 | (0.68) | 0.3 |
| Form V | None | (0.21) | |

NB: Percentages are of the total enrolment and not enrolment potential, percentages in parenthesis are from Africans in a handful of government schools. European schools number from Standard V to Form VI. This table has transposed these grades to the approximate African equivalent, which included standard VI and excluded Form VI.

Source: Frank (1960). *Race and Nationalism – The Struggle for power in Southern Rhodesia* Fordhan University Press. New York p. 123

What the table shows is that the large African enrolment percentage of 56.74% registered in Sub-Standard A and B in 1956 drastically fell to 1.38% in non-government schools and from 43.02% in African government schools to 2.9% by the time the pupils reached Standard VI. The attrition rate in European schools in the same grades was more gradual falling from 25.6% to 7.3%. Similarly the enrolment percentages in African non-government secondary schools fell from 0.54 to 0.01 and 2.73 to 0.21 for those African pupils in government schools. In European schools the fall was again much more gradual from 5.7% to 0.3%. Considered against the wide disparity between the black and white child population, the differences were significant.

This situation of racial discrimination was intensified during successive colonial regimes in all sectors of education and training. In 1962, for example, out of a total of 436 apprentices country-wide only 10 were Africans. Records also show that in 1963, out of 317 apprentices, only 9 were Africans. The following table shows this phenomenon clearly.

TABLE 3

Number of Trainees in Various Apprenticeship Courses by Race in 1962

| <u>Industry</u> | <u>Europeans</u> | <u>Africans</u> |
|-----------------|-------------------|------------------|
| Aircraft | 28 | 3 |
| Building | 29 | 4 |
| Engineering | 263 | 4 |
| Mining | 98 | 1 |
| Motor Trade | 193 | 22 |
| Printing | 120 | - |
| Railways | <u>84</u> | <u>18</u> |
| Total | <u>915</u> | <u>52</u> |

Source: Reginald, (1975). **Racism and Apartheid in Southern Africa – Rhodesia** UNESCO Press, Paris, p. 49

As can be seen, African apprentices were substantially out numbered by the whites in every industry. This clearly demonstrates that the majority

of Africans did not have access to training. In fact, employment figures for 1962 showed that in the mining industry, 70% of the African labour force had no formal apprenticeship skills and 22% were semi-skilled. Only 8% were in staff or pensionable jobs. In the manufacturing industries, 87% were unskilled, 10% were semi-skilled, 35% were skilled and none were in staff jobs.

This African/European divide reached its peak during the reign of Ian Smith who sought to systematically restrict African advancement in all sectors of education and training. The Smith regime set out to reduce as much of government support for African education as possible. Under the so-called Community Development policy, all aspects of African development including education and health became the responsibility of local governments. These were run by African Councils under the titular authority of the Chief.

Local governments suffered several disadvantages. Firstly, their resource base was small since they could not tax their people. All tax went to Central Government treasury. In fact the main source of revenue for local governments was from the sale of beer at several beer hall outlets. Secondly, rural councils did not have adequately trained personnel to efficiently administer their affairs. The short training programmes offered at Domboshawa Training Centre were limited in purpose and scope.

Thirdly, these councils lacked political power and control over their affairs, after all, the Chief who bore ultimate authority over all decisions of Council was a government appointee who received a salary from central government. In short, local Councils could not make critical decisions without the prior approval of central government. They relied on the patronage of the white central government and handouts from treasury. These constraints undermined the ability of Councils to provide adequate health, education and social welfare services. The whole concept of community development was a form of apartheid, which crippled African development by denying it vital services and critical resources from central government. On the contrary, all aspects of European welfare and development were funded by the central government (Zvobgo, 1980).

In the sphere of African education, the impact of this racist policy was evident in the limited facilities and opportunities available for Africans especially at the secondary level. The net result was the sharp drop out rate, which is seen, in the following table:

TABLE 4

Student Attrition rate in African Academic Secondary Schools 1966 – 1971

| Year (figures) | Form | Enrolment | Drop Out Rate (in |
|-------------------|----------|-----------|----------------------|
| | | | Over Proceeding Year |
| 1966 | I | 6 137 | - |
| 1968 | III | 2 062 | 3 959 |
| 1970 | Lower VI | 187 | 1 780 |

Source: Composed from **Reports of the Secretary for African Education** for 1966, p. 18 Table 6 (a), 1968, p.24 Table 6a, 1970 p. 25 Table 6(a)

Taking the 1966 Form I enrolment as 100% the table shows that in 1968 only 33.6% of the original 1966 form I enrolment of 6 137 reached Form III which is the transitional point from junior to senior secondary. Only 3% of that Form I enrolment reached Lower VI, which is also the point of transition from senior secondary to High School Certificate. In fact only 2.9% obtained a full six-year secondary education. It was these blatant inequalities which made drastic education reform imperative at the attainment of independence.

Transformation of Education in the Post Colonial Period

Considered in the context of the developments we have seen in African education, the reform process that was triggered by the achievement of independence in 1980 was a reaction by the black majority government against the policies of previous governments and the structures set up to govern education during those regimes. Indeed, discrimination in

education was one of the major reasons for which the armed liberation struggle was waged in the 1970's.(ZANU PF Manifesto, 1980).

It is not surprising therefore, that in the post 1980 period, Zimbabwe saw radical changes in educational policy. Firstly, the racial structures in education were abolished. The two formerly separate systems of education were integrated into a single non-racial system. The de-racialisation and democratisation of education were two of the most profound reforms in the new Zimbabwe. Educational restructuring was considered the cornerstone of political, economic and social reform. It was not only education, which experienced drastic changes. Health services as well as other basic social services were also subjected to major reforms. In the sphere of health, all hospitals and other medical facilities were de-racialised thereby giving Africans access to medical care in previously exclusively white medical institutions. In the tourism sector, all tourist facilities were de-racialised. The tourism industry, itself a former white preserve, became open to African entrepreneurs. (The author witnessed Blacks acquiring formerly White-owned hotels).

One of the areas that had given whites racial superiority and control of the economy and government was education. It is in this sphere that the most dramatic reform initiatives took place with the most remarkable achievements being made in the first decade of independence. The following were some of the indicators of this success.

- I. Between 1979 and March 1992, the number of primary schools in the country increased by 189.5% from 2401 to 4549.
- II. Primary school enrolment rose from 819200 to 2.4 million a three fold increase.
- III. The number of primary school teachers rose by 210 % from 28 455 in 1979 to 59874 in 1992 (Zvobgo 1999).

It was not only in the sphere of primary education that achievements were made. Similar successes were made in the secondary sector for example:

- I. Between 1979 and 1992, the number of secondary schools increased from a mere 177 to 1517 a rise of 857%.
- II. Enrolment rose from 66215 to 687742 a 1038% increase.
- III. The number of teachers increased by 700% from 3730 to 25729 (Lind, 1994, p. 22)

Much of this expansion took place in rural areas where, prior to independence, fewer secondary schools existed for example, in that period, government built 70 rural day secondary schools with at least one such school in each of the country's 55 districts. The rest of the secondary schools were built by the various responsible authorities such as district and rural councils, churches, commercial farmers, committees and others with some government financial support in the form of grants.

The growth of the secondary school sector was fuelled by the demand for Form 1 secondary places from the growing pool of primary school graduates. In 1985 as many as 85% of Grade 7 graduates were enrolled for Form 1. By 1990, this demand had dropped to about 70% of those who completed Grade 7 in 1989 (Zvobgo, 1999). This was largely the result of the increasing failure by many parents to meet the ever-increasing costs of secondary education.

At tertiary level, the trend was similar. In Technical and Vocational colleges enrolment rose from 3469 to 9261 while in teachers colleges, student numbers increased from 2824 to 16576. At the then only state university, University of Zimbabwe enrolment increased from 2200 to 9017 in the same period (Zvobgo 1999).

But it was not only from the point of view of increased numbers of people who gained access to education that the impact of post-colonial educational policy is remembered. There were other far-reaching outcomes of this reform initiative. A wide range of innovative teaching

strategies were developed and implemented in order to improve the quality of education. The improvement of teacher training was one such strategy.

Faced with the escalating increase in primary school enrolments, government introduced in 1980, a new teacher primary education code named ZINTEC, the Zimbabwe Integrated National Teacher Education Course. This programme had its origins in the liberation war camps schools in Mozambique where the war situation required innovative strategies to deal with education in crisis situations. The philosophy of the Zintec programme was to integrate theory with practice and learning with work. The student teacher spent a third of the training duration at college learning the theories of the profession and two thirds of the time as a full time classroom practitioner under the close supervision and monitoring by field lecturers, senior school teachers and Heads of Schools. This strategy assisted in reducing the problem of teacher shortages in primary schools. This method of training was so successful that even the conventional teacher training colleges for both primary and secondary teachers embraced many aspects of the Zintec programme. The Zintecisation of teacher education represented one of the most significant reform initiatives in postcolonial educational reform in Zimbabwe.

Both the conventional teacher education institutions and the University of Zimbabwe to which they were associated, responded to the needs of the education system with urgency. The teacher education curriculum was revised so that it emphasised skills acquisition in order to speed up the production of competent teachers. Between 1981 and 1990, both the five Zintec colleges and the eleven conventional colleges in existence then produced over 10000 teachers (Zvobgo, 1999).

A second reform initiative was directed at teaching methodologies. This was done through the introduction of the Zimbabwe Science kit (Zim Science). This strategy was based on a philosophy of applying appropriate technology and equipment designed from locally available resources to teach natural sciences in those schools that had no electricity and conventional equipment. For the first time, rural children

in underdeveloped areas were taught Physics, Chemistry and Biology using the kit.

A third strategy was the transformation of the Primary Education Development Unit (PEDU) and Secondary Education Development Unit, (SEDU) into a single unit called the Curriculum Development Unit (CDU). This integration brought together experienced manpower and critical financial and material resources, a move that significantly strengthened efforts to develop effectively new subject syllabuses as well as evaluation and monitoring mechanisms.

The Curriculum Development Unit made significant strides in developing and implementing new curriculum materials using specially trained subject experts. The result was the emergence of new teaching and learning materials specially suited to the needs of a new Zimbabwe in terms of content and cultural orientation.

To supervise the implementation of the new curriculum and ensure improved educational standards, a new schools inspectorate system was put in place. As principal of one of the ZINTEC colleges, the writer witnessed how the United National Children Educational Fund (UNICEF) and other donors such as the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) contributed significantly to this process by providing vehicles, learning and teaching equipment and other essential materials.

An additional reform initiative was the creation of the department of Non-formal and Adult Education to give adults and those out of the formal school system access to education. Significant strides were made in this area. Evening classes in both rural and urban areas were set up and their numbers increased from 56 in 1979 to 336 in 1990 while adult literacy went up from around 45% in 1980 to about 78% in 1990 (Ministry of Education, 1991).

The Impact of the Educational Reform Initiatives on Financial Resources and Government Expenditure on Education between 1980 and 1990

The democratisation of education had considerable impact on state resources. Skyrocketing enrolments led to increased budgets as shown in table 5:

These costs seriously undermined the capacity of the economy to sustain education. During the first five years after independence, a number of reasons had encouraged government to invest huge resources in education. For example, Zimbabwe had become the destination for international aid and support.

TABLE 5

Government Expenditure on Education 1980-90

| Year over | Budget Allocation in Zim Dollars | %increase |
|----------------------|---|----------------------|
| | | Previous year |
| 1980 | 180 472 000 | - |
| 1981 | 209 070 000 | 16 |
| 1982 | 408 400 000 | 95 |
| 1983 | 416 805 000 | 2 |
| 1984 | 486 594 000 | 17 |
| 1986 | 674 969 000 | 39 |
| 1990 | 1 billion | |
| 48 | | |

Source: Compiled from the **Reports of the Secretary for the Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture for the years** 1980 p. 17, 1981 p.17, 1982 p.18, 1983 p.18, 1984 p. 17, 1986 p. 34, 1990 p. 35.

Also, the democratic stance taken by the government in public affairs, supported by the policy of national reconciliation especially after a protracted and bitter-armed struggle against the Ian Smith regime,

earned the government much international respect and support. International donor agencies were willing to assist the government in its economic and social development programmes. There were, therefore, high expectations that the country's economic performance would improve.

Expected Performance of the Economy in the Context of the Prevailing Economic and Political Environment

There were high hopes that the attainment of independence and the end of the United Nations sanctions would activate economic growth and revive the once resilient industrial base. It was believed that the country was poised for a re-energised economy, which would generate the much-needed financial resource support for government programmes. This belief was based on the following assumptions:

- I. A rise of 8% in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was anticipated between 1982 and 1985. The production of goods was expected to rise much faster than that of services.
- II. The annual growth rate in wages was anticipated to rise by 3%. In fact Gross Fixed Capital rose from 19% realised in 1981/82 to 28% in 1984/85 while domestic services were expected to rise from 11% of GDP in 1981/82 to 17% in 1984/85.
- III. Rising employment levels were expected to raise capital consumption levels amongst Africans (Mandaza, 1987).

The euphoria of independence itself, increased public confidence in the future of the economy. This increased confidence in the economy was encouraged by the good rains of 1980/81 as well as the increased access to more quality land by more Africans. However, this confidence was short lived as economic conditions soon changed.

Actual Performance of the Economy

The actual performance of the economy was well below the planned target for example:

- I. Between 1981 and 1982, the GDP registered a negative growth rate of 2% with a slight 3% recovery in 1983. In fact economic growth fell below the anticipated 8%.
- II. Other service sectors showed a mere 4.2% growth rate and 1.4% for the material production sector (Mandaza, 1987).

This fall in economic performance began to worsen during the second half of this decade as foreign investments began to dwindle. This was due to a number of factors such as:

- I. The government's continued Marxist/Leninist pronouncements and economic policies which began to threaten the profitability and viability of multi-national corporations. This resulted in reduced capital inflow into the country as well as a serious loss of friends amongst countries of the western block.
- II. Anti-capitalist labour policies which reduced profitability and restrictions on the repatriation of profit earnings frightened investors,
- III. Government monitory policies with their emphasis on increased spending on social services, increased the country's foreign and domestic debt,
- IV. Reduced capital inflows and growing foreign currency shortages began to undermine the economy's capacity to generate resources needed to fund national programmes,
- V. Reduced investments resulted in slow economic growth leading to job losses and loss of earnings.
- VI. An unstable political environment arising from the Matebeleland civil war between former guerrillas of Joshua Nkomo's Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) and the armed forces of Prime Minister Robert Mugabe's government made investment in this part of Zimbabwe both risky and difficult.

- VII. The net effect of this situation was low economic performance and growing failure by the government to sustain its social and economic reform programmes which were costing the state considerable resources. Education, in particular, proved to be one of the most expensive social services second only to defence (Zvobgo, 1999).

In addition to these high costs of education, health had its own demands as well. Rural hospitals and clinics were wholly funded by the state with medical services being dispensed free of cost to all rural people. All these and other social services benefits, which were provided freely to all, weighed heavily on state resources. In fact, in just under a decade, Zimbabwe was close to becoming a social welfare state.

As government's socialist oriented economic policies and pronouncements continued unabated, a disinvestment campaign by western governments and multi-national companies began to take their toll on the country's economy. This was evident in the rapidly diminishing foreign currency reserves and increasing national debt. The resources available for social services also began to dwindle resulting in the weakening of the services themselves and the education sector like all other social services was gravely affected. The disinvestment rate of companies seeking relocation in Botswana, Mozambique, South Africa, Malawi and Zambia became clear warning signals of an economic crisis in the making.

As a consequence of these and other factors, there was a sharp decline in revenue. The rapid escalation on the balance of payments created conditions that made it difficult for government to fund national programmes. This was evident in the rise in the budget deficit from 7.7% of GDP in 1981/82 to 10% in 1992/93. Xavier Khadhani reported that the debt service ratio stood at an estimated 30% in 1983 a 300% increase in three years from the 1980 levels yet this was the period of rapid social services expansion with education taking the lead. This performance was bound to impact negatively on the government's ability to finance its programmes, the most costly of which were health and education. In fact a 3.8% economic growth rate was expected to support, apart from other social services, a 13% expansion in education.

Under these conditions, education began to experience great difficulties and the gains made during the first five years of independence in improving citizens' right of access to education started to suffer. An equally serious outcome of this economic situation for education was the difficulty in addressing issues of quality. Between 1985 and 1990, qualitative improvements became more and more difficult to pursue. Shrinking state resources compounded by reduced financial support for education by donor agencies and foreign governments, resulted in diminishing teaching and learning resources and a failing school supervision and inspectorate system. Constant breakdown of vehicles and the lack of spare parts, as well as increasing operational costs, began to take their toll on the quality of services the education system could offer.

In the classroom, the impact of recession and poor economic performance on teaching and learning was noticeable. Resources for teaching and learning became fewer as production costs began to skyrocket. Crowded classes and high teacher/pupil ratios of 1:45 or more, began to affect teaching and learning standards. Also, poor conditions of service, mostly for rural teachers, led to low morale and high teacher turnover. These and other factors resulted in high pupil attrition rate. The system was beginning to weaken. A desk study on education in Zimbabwe carried out by Agneta Linda in 1994 revealed serious growing internal weaknesses in the education system. Of the 376 032 pupils who enrolled in Grade One in 1980, 27% dropped out before reaching Grade Seven, most of them between Grade One and Two. This meant that these children left school before they had acquired any useful basic literacy and numeracy skills. In fact therefore, not all children completed their primary education as required by government. Of those who remained in school, 46% dropped out before reaching the first year of junior secondary education (Form One) while 54% dropped out before completing the second year (Form Two). A massive 67% dropped out before reaching the fourth year (Form Four or the Ordinary School Certificate Level). This also means that these pupils left school without attaining the Ordinary School Certificate, the basic minimum requirement for entering any professional training course in the country. To put it more dramatically, one out of every three pupils who entered primary school in 1981 reached Form Four. This works out to an

internal efficiency rate of 33%. The Ordinary School level graduation rate amongst those who entered school in 1981 showed a much lower efficiency rate. Of the 409 000 students who sat for the Ordinary School Level examinations, less than 18 000 obtained the minimum five Ordinary Level passes. This represents only 4.4% of the pupils who started school eleven years earlier (Lind, 1994).

By 1985, serious internal weaknesses in the education system had become a cause for concern to all stakeholders.

The concerns included the following issues:

- I. The lack of adequate support and planning for free education;
- II. The lack of sufficient internal review mechanisms needed to reduce the levels of inefficiency;
- III. The apparent failure by government to relate the education reform initiative plans to the available resources;
- IV. The large numbers of children entering school without any financial contribution coming from parents and the impact of this policy on the quality of education the government could offer.
- V. The very large numbers of untrained teachers with low academic qualifications was compromising the standard of teaching. Despite the significant contribution of the Zintec programme to teacher output, there was, in 1986, some 25 000 untrained teachers manning numerous schools. Many of them did not have an Ordinary Level School certificate and despite their large presence in schools, the teacher pupil ratio was as high as 1:45;
- VI. The high staff turnover in rural schools due to poor living and working conditions meant that mostly desperate and under-qualified teachers taught in those schools, and

- VII. Poor classroom furniture and the shortage of library and reading materials were undermining the quality of education schools could provide.

A sample of schools selected in Agneta Linda's desk study revealed that only 18% of pupils were in classrooms that had a sufficient number of chairs and benches and only 12% of classrooms had enough desks for all pupils (Mandaza, 1987; p. 124). The policy of free primary education for all, had thus created serious problems and it became clear that government alone could not cope with the ever-escalating financial, human and material costs of an ever-growing system.

Achievements of the first Decade of Independence

Developments in education and other social sectors during this decade were not necessarily characterised by difficulties and shortcomings. Many achievements were realised for example:

- I. A total of 2 674 821 children completed full seven years of primary education between 1980 and 1991.
- II. 1 465 322 pupils went through two years of junior secondary education in the same period.
- III. 954 864 students acquired four-year secondary education (Secretary for Education and Culture 1980 and 1991).

In the sphere of teacher training, available figures for 1987 to 1991, show that some 28089 primary school teachers and 54 739 secondary school teachers were trained.

These were certainly no mean achievements given the diverse social and economic areas, which called for government resources (Zvobgo, 1999). Attempts to weigh these achievements, against the economic hardships they placed on government and the economy, have produced two interesting positions. Government critics argue that these same successes could have been achieved at less costs to the state had adequate and careful planning been put in place. The absence of

alternative strategies for financing education is considered to have been responsible for the soaring budget costs of education leading to serious over-expenditures in this sector. It is also argued that high costs, incurred in education, were not translated into tangible economic benefits for the country.

Supporters of government policies on the other hand, argue that education, as a basic human right, cannot be denied to any citizen and therefore the costs incurred in liberalising education were morally, politically and socially justifiable. They further argue that it is the responsibility of government to develop its own people. Any attempt to sacrifice human development at the alter of financial austerity is therefore rejected. While this argument is laudable, there is no denying that better planning and management could have reduced some of the costs. The cumulative effects of the various reform initiatives introduced since independence on the state purse prompted government to review its policies.

The Advent of the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) and its Impact on Education

The financial and material resource burden placed on the state by the government's pro-socialist programmes weighed heavily on the fiscus. With the productive sector of the economy performing badly, and donor aid dwindling, government began to consider, seriously, the implications of continuing along the socialist route. A decision was reached in 1990, that the socialist ideological stance pursued by the state was creating serious economic problems. Government finally conceded that socialist orientation was not viable in Zimbabwe. Under pressure from the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, government agreed to strengthen the economy along the free market route. It was this decision, which brought about the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme. These international finance organisations, supported by western countries which fund them, notably Britain, and the United States of America, wanted a complete reform of the government economic policies. Government was presented with a number of preconditions for the renewed aid. These included the following:

- I. Economic liberalisation in order to allow increased participation of the private sector and other players;
- II. Reduction of government's role in economic management;
- III. Market forces to be the determinants on prices;
- IV. Deregulation of the labour market to enable employers to hire and fire workers with limited restraint from government;
- V. Introduction of cost recovery measures in education and the health sector;
- VI. Making the private sector the engines for economic growth;
- VII. Reduction of government control of parastatals to allow for their privatisation and commercialisation;
- VIII. Reduction of the civil service in order to reduce government expenditure,
- IX. Reduction of inflation through tight monetary policies;
- X. Reduced spending and domestic and international borrowing; and
- XI. Improvement of revenue collection leading to the creation of the Zimbabwe Revenue Authority (Zimbabwe, 1990).

Although the government claimed that the structural adjustment of the economy was a home brewed programme, the form it took, portrayed the hallmarks of IMF and World Bank prescriptions. These prescriptions, had disastrously failed elsewhere in the developing world notably in Jamaica, Ghana, Tanzania and Zambia.

The Economic Structural Adjustment Programme 1991 – 1995

In compliance with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank preconditions, a number of strategies were introduced to reform the economy. These were as follows:

- I. Reduction of Central Government deficit from 10% of GDP to 5% by the fiscal year 1994-95;
- II. Trade liberalisation in order to encourage investment inflow;
- III. Domestic deregulation in order to increase domestic competition and provide entrepreneurs with the freedom necessary to respond to emerging marketing opportunities and pressures;
- IV. A sustained reduction in government spending through reduction of the civil service and reduced expenditure on social services through a cost-sharing arrangement with the beneficiaries. What this meant was that henceforth:
 - There would be no free health services whether in urban or rural health institutions. Patients would have to share the costs of health services with government;
 - There would be no more free primary education in rural and urban schools;
 - Government schools would be allowed to supplement resources from Treasury by levying parents for various services offered by the schools;
 - All educational institutions would institute cost-recovery measures in order to reduce the financial burden created by increasing costs,
 - In addition, institutions would subcontract all non-core business to the private sector. This meant that services such as catering, cleaning, landscaping and security would no longer be the responsibility of the government (Zimbabwe Framework, 1990).

Private companies including those formed by retrenched civil servants were required to compete for these services through the open tender process. Schools would pay for these services using some government grants and funds generated locally through levies.

The ESAP document statement on Education spelt out the anticipated impact of ESAP on education very clearly. The statement spelt out that the fiscal adjustment required of education would be considerably greater than that of the health sector. At independence, spending on education nearly doubled in one year (1981) thereafter, over the first decade, the annual growth rate of the budget was 10.3%. The Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture and the Ministry of Higher Education and Technology received about Z\$1 532 million from treasury in 1989 which was equivalent to about 10% of the GDP or about 18.5% of Central Government Spending. It was anticipated that by 1994/95 government spending on education would be reduced by about 0.5% of GDP, that is, about 8.7% in real terms (World Bank Précis 105).

The assumption was that these reductions would enable government to direct the savings as direct investment particularly in the productive sectors of the economy and job creation. The development of the informal sector was considered crucial at a time when the formal sector was shrinking in size and productivity due to increasing economic hardships and disinvestment campaign by western countries.

These assumptions however, ignored the fundamental realities being faced by the Zimbabwean peasantry and working class people. Both groups were facing serious financial difficulties resulting from erratic rains, severe droughts and low crop production. In urban areas, increasing joblessness and growing closure of foreign as well as domestic companies reduced earnings available to the worker. This meant that the ability of the people to participate in cost sharing was severely eroded. Indeed, many children either dropped out of secondary education or, did not enroll in the first instance. Thus, the concept of cost sharing under ESAP was fraught with serious limitations and difficulties from the very beginning.

Initially, reduction in government spending on education was to be directed at those schools that received higher than average subsidies per student. This included former Group A, Trust and Mission secondary schools. In addition, 0.5% of GDP, the equivalent of Z\$160 million would be raised in 1994/95, through cost recovery measures directed on relatively well-endowed schools (World Bank Précis no.

105). The system was structured in such a way as to relate to ability to pay. This means that a system of exemptions was to be introduced for those who could not pay. However, in the long run, the cost recovery programme became extremely painful as the costs to be borne by parents continued to increase.

Those schools that experienced high reductions in government support introduced a host of very high levies to make up for lost grants. The result was that a lot of African children dropped out of these schools and thereby inadvertently creating schools which were white islands in a predominantly black society. ESAP began on very harsh note and although it was argued that the adjustment would be painful but short and would be economically viable, it proved to be long, slow and regressive. As already discussed, before the introduction of ESAP, education had enjoyed high budgetary allocation from Treasury. The introduction of ESAP changed the situation drastically, for example: the Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture's vote for primary education dropped from \$28.7 million in 1990 to \$23.7 million in 1992. In fact, the overall plan was to reduce spending from the previous 24% of GDP in 1989/90 to 18% in the 1990/91 fiscal year. In the following years, it would be at 19.5% in 1991/92, 20.6% in 1993/94 and 20.7% in 1994/95. This would correspondingly represent 9.22% of GDP in 1990/91, 9.02% in 1991/92, 8.9% in 1992/93, 8.82% in 1993/94 and 8.72% in 1994/95 (World Bank Précis No. 105).

These reductions were anticipated against new fee structures which would be introduced in education. The new fee rates were introduced under the 1991 Education Amendment Bill which revised the provisions of the 1987 Education Act, the legal basis for free education. The new Act authorised the introduction of fees in all urban primary and secondary schools and rural secondary schools. These were given as follows:

Table 6

School fees and grants per student per type of school (19991) in Z\$

| Type of School | Income from fees per child per annum | Income from grants per child per annum | Total income per child per annum |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|----------------------------------|
| Urban Low Density Primary | 210.00 | 8.00 | 218.00 |
| Urban High Density Primary | 60.00 | 12.00 | 72.00 |
| Rural Primary | 0.00 | 24.00 | 24.00 |
| Urban Low Density Secondary | 450.00 | 7.00 | 457.00 |
| Urban High Density Secondary | 210.00 | 10.00 | 220.00 |
| Rural Secondary | 150.00 | 20.00 | 170.00 |

Source: Bonside (1991). **ESAP and Education for the Poor**, Mambo Press, Gweru .

This amendment meant that:

- I. All children in urban low density primary schools (Former Group A) were required to pay much higher fees than those in the high density (former African Townships) schools who were previously exempted but now also paid fees.
- II. Rural primary children were still exempted (1991 Education Amendment Act).
- III. All urban low-density secondary school pupils paid increased fees of up to \$450.00 per year while their counterparts in high-density suburb schools paid a relatively lower figure of \$210.00.
- IV. Rural secondary pupils were not exempted despite the hardships encountered by rural parents. They were all required to pay \$150.00 per annum.

These were very high costs when it is considered that the average weekly wage for an African industrial worker was \$250.00 while that for farm workers and mine workers was \$75.00. These wages covered accommodation rentals, town council services, education, health, and groceries for an average family of six members. These workers made virtually no savings from their income. The majority of the rural peasants lived below the poverty datum line and were unable to meet the new fee levels. The result was that more and more parents found themselves unable to sustain their families. Consequently more and more urban children found themselves going back to rural schools to escape the hard economic conditions imposed by ESAP as parents tried to cushion themselves against the high cost of living. Rural parents were in a worse position, as there was no escape for them from the new fees. This situation was further worsened by more increases in fees, which were announced in May 1997. The new fee structure was as follows:

Table 7
Ministry of Education: New fees structure

| Category of School | Tuition fees per term | | |
|---|-----------------------|-------|-------------|
| | 1996 | 1997 | Increment % |
| P.1 Primary Schools (Schools in Low Density Urban Areas) Zimbabwean Pupils | \$100 | \$19 | 90 |
| Extra-Territorial Pupils | US\$465 | \$150 | 268 |
| P.2 Primary Schools (Schools in High Density Urban Areas) Zimbabwean Pupils | \$35 | \$50 | 43 |
| Extra-Territorial Pupils | US\$465 | \$150 | 268 |
| P.3 Primary Schools (Schools in Rural Areas) Zimbabwean Pupils | Nil | Nil | |

| | | | | |
|---|---------|---------|----------|-----|
| Extra-Territorial Pupils | | US\$465 | \$150 | 268 |
| S.1 Secondary Schools (Schools in Low Density Urban Areas) Zimbabwean Pupils | | \$210 | \$400 | 90 |
| Extra-Territorial Pupils | | US\$200 | \$650 | 351 |
| S.2 Secondary Schools (Schools in High Density Urban Areas) Zimbabwean Pupils | | \$150 | \$105 | 43 |
| Extra-Territorial Pupils | | US\$650 | \$200 | 351 |
| S.3 Secondary Schools (Schools in Rural Areas) Zimbabwean Pupils | | \$60 | \$75 | 25 |
| Extra-Territorial Pupils | | \$650 | US\$2 00 | 352 |
| BOARDING FEES PER SCHOOL TERM | | | | |
| All Primary Zimbabwe Pupils | \$665 | \$1 000 | | 50 |
| Extra-Territorial Pupils | \$1 320 | US\$200 | | 73 |
| All Secondary Zimbabwe Pupils | \$800 | \$1 200 | | 50 |
| Extra-Territorial Pupils | \$1 410 | US\$250 | | 102 |

Source: *The Herald*, 25 April, 1997.

NB: Fees in non-government schools are decided by the responsible authorities but they must seek approval from the ministry before the increase is implemented.

In pursuit of what government believed to be cost recovery programme, fees went up by between 43% and 90%. Fees for rural secondary schools went up by 25% up from \$60 to \$75 per term. Although rural primary children were spared the hardships, fees for their counterparts

in former Group B schools in high density suburbs went up by 43% whilst fees for those in former Group A schools were hiked by 30%. All this, was in addition to the increasing hardships caused by skyrocketing prices of basic food commodities (The Herald 25 April, 1997).

Although rural parents were exempted from paying primary school fees, this meant that rural primary schools depended on the annual government grant of \$24 per child for their recurrent expenditure when in fact each child required at least \$150. The results were disastrous. For example:

- I. Children often learned under the open sky because classroom roofs could not be repaired. Where roofs existed, these were often leaking;
- II. Basic text books were inadequate because of unavailability of money.
- III. Resource centres and libraries were non-existent;
- IV. Teachers' houses were poorly constructed and maintained because of lack of adequate resources;
- V. There was no provision of funds from government for the construction of new primary schools or the renovation of existing ones.

In the final analysis, rural children were getting a raw deal. All in all, ESAP brought about serious difficulties for parents who were unable to raise fees for their children. Even those enrolled in better equipped urban or privately run schools met with serious hardships.

By 1992, there already was evidence of more and more students dropping out before sitting for examinations. Between 1990 and 1992, there was a 14% drop in the number of students sitting for ordinary level examinations compared with 12.5% between 1987 and 1989. In 1991, 209 889 students registered for ordinary level examinations but in 1992 only 180 000 registered. In 1992, 207 488 pupils were assisted with

tuition fees and 15 462 with examination fees compared with 195 000 and 14 600 respectively in 1989. (Lind, 1994; p. 22).

Anthony Benridge, writing for Catholic sentinel community surveillance for monitoring the social dimension of ESAP, observed that the effects of ESAP on education were devastating. One of the main indicators of this crisis was the increased pupil dropout level in primary schools. A sample used in the research showed that only 83% of children aged 6 to 12 years were going to school compared with 86% between 1987 - 89. The reasons which were cited were mainly financial. As a result of rising education costs and increasing poverty, enrolment at secondary school level fell by 10% between 1991 and 1993. High school examination fees compounded the situation.²⁸ At Ordinary Level, examination fees in 1994, stood at \$60.00 per subject. This meant that a student sitting for 5 subjects required \$300.00 examination fees. In the majority of schools where students sat for 9 subjects, the fees amounted to \$540.00. A 57% increase in 'A' level examination fees in February 1995 was a shock to many parents. The fees increased from \$168 to \$264 per subject. This meant that a student sitting for 3 subjects required \$792 plus \$167 for the English General paper. In addition, a basic centre fee of \$104 was required. All in all, one Advanced Level student required a total of \$1 063.00. These fees were well beyond the reach of most parents (Benridge, 1994).

Private education experienced harsher conditions with costs and fees escalating to unprecedented levels. With the introduction of the cost recovery policy, most private schools began to charge an annual desk fee ranging between \$20 000.00 and \$40 000.00. This fee was not part of the general fees. In addition, several levies were charged despite the fact that no school was allowed to effect such levies without the approval of the Secretary for Education, Sport and Culture. These included science laboratory levy, hostel levy, sports levy, library levy and a host of others. In some of the private schools, the high fees were intended to restrict the number of African students seeking admission. However, even government schools also began to levy students although the levies have remained lower as a result of government control.

Tertiary education has experienced a similar crisis. Technical and Teachers Training College students have seen tuition fees rise from \$1 600.00 per year in previous years to \$17 000.00 in August 2001. University students have received an even greater shock. By 2002, their fees had risen from \$1 600.00 to \$25 000.00 per year for humanities and social science students, whilst natural science students have had their fees hiked to \$30 000.00. Medical and engineering students have had their fees raised to \$35 000.00 per year. Private universities charged as much as \$200 000.00 per student per year. Despite nation-wide student demonstrations against this new fee structure, the government proceeded to implement it as part of its commitment to ESAP. The previous policy of charging low fees at tertiary level was therefore abandoned. Government also negotiated a new arrangement with a consortium of banks to provide loans to students beginning August the 1st 2001. Under the arrangement, students are required to negotiate loans directly with the banks and their parents provide surety. Banks charge 10% interest annually on all loans and track down defaulters. In other words, government is no longer responsible for funding tertiary students although it provides guarantee for the money banks loan out to students in order to safeguard shareholders' investments. These fees have continued to escalate as institutions find it more and more expensive to secure provisions. It would be recommended that Government concentrates more on availing funds for students to borrow, and ensuring that the borrowed funds are returned. This would make the student funding programmes more self-sustaining.

The impact of ESAP on education has therefore been devastating. As the economy continued to experience problems of viability, an attempt was made in 1996 to consolidate the few economic gains of ESAP. Government introduced a support programme called Zimbabwe Programme for Economic and Social Transformation – Zimprest 1996 – 2000. Some of its objectives were:

- I. To restore macro-economic stability because without this stability, no meaningful socio-economic transformation was possible;
- II. Further promote economic and social development and greater equity of both opportunities and outcomes;

- III. Promote greater decentralisation in order to encourage local responsibility and accountability and public participation in decisions about management of national resources;
- IV. Promote Indigenisation in order to economically empower the African masses;
- V. Promote and exchange market liberalisation by allowing private business and individuals to have personal foreign currency banking accounts so that they can transact in foreign currency at market determined exchange rates;
- VI. Allow Corporate foreign currency banking accounts which make it possible for exporters to retain their export proceeds;
- VII. Licensing of foreign exchange bureaux and
- VIII. Unification of official and inter bank market exchange rate (Zimbabwe, 2000; p. 3).

Zimprest, on the whole, was the strategy for improving and promoting the implementation of ESAP. It set out to do this by providing a timetable for the achievement of each task by each government ministry/department. Government officers were to police all departments in order to ensure that the outlined objectives were met.

The Ministry of Education was tasked to achieve the following:

- I. Improve capacity utilisation and reduce running costs in the sector;
- II. Rationalise central government structures and develop a comprehensive strategy for the decentralisation of management responsibilities to education institutions and local authorities;
- III. Improve the relevance of education curricula to the economy and improve the employability of school leavers and graduates;
- IV. Increase access to information technology at the school level;

- V. Improve access to education for disadvantaged groups, especially girls;
- VI. Improve cost sharing strategies;
- VII. Intensify efforts to improve early childhood learning facilities and
- VIII. Provide adults with opportunities for life long education (Zimbabwe, 19996; p. 3).

Zimprest programme was an admission that ESAP had not performed as expected. In fact, the anticipated reduction in fiscal deficit of 5% of GDP by the end of the fiscal year 1994/95 was missed by a wide margin. The turn out was 13.5% of GDP. This was because persistent budgetary underperformance brought the country to the brink of a debt trap and economic collapse. Also, after 1998, the economy and all social service sectors suffered a major blow with the crush of the Zimbabwean dollar on the exchange market from 1 US dollar to 38 Zim dollars to 1 US dollar to 55 Zim. dollars. Apart from this, Zimbabwe's involvement in the Democratic Republic of the Congo's civil war and the payment of lump sum pensions of \$50 000 plus monthly allowance of \$2 000.00 to each of the 20 000 approved war veterans was unfavourably received by the country's aid donors principally the European union countries and the international finance organisations mainly as the IMF and the World Bank. This, and other factors such as the persistent decline in economic performance, worsened the economic crisis. What this meant for education was that:

- I. School and college books, which were previously imported, were now more difficult to obtain due to acute shortages of foreign currency;
- II. Equipment previously obtained from outside the country became difficult to procure;
- III. The Ministry of Education began to face extreme difficulties regarding the payment of students' examination fees to Cambridge University due to the high foreign exchange rates and the total collapse of foreign currency reserves;
- IV. Rising inflation and high commodity prices, created difficult living conditions for teachers many of whom began to leave the country

for greener pastures in South Africa, Botswana, Namibia and the United Kingdom. The obvious solution one would proffer in this scenario is saving money through reduction in military spending.

Increasing economic difficulties worsened government's ability to fund the education system. As a result, the Junior Secondary School national examinations had to be scrapped largely because of the difficulties of finding the money to pay markers and meet other related costs. This meant that there was no longer an intermediate testing mechanism for children immediately after the Primary School Grade 7 class and before the Ordinary Secondary School Certificate (Form 4), as was the case before. The economic crisis created by ESAP crippled all social services. The cumulative result of the problems created by ESAP was its abandonment by government. In June 2002, the then Deputy Minister for Information and Publicity in the President's Office, Jonathan Moyo, described ESAP as an Albatross around the government's neck. On July the 26th 2002, President Mugabe declared that ESAP was officially dead and that people were now free to get on with their lives (The Herald, 26 July, 2002).

The funding of education after the death of ESAP has shown an upturn and return to the Pre-ESAP spending pattern. The 2002 budget allocation announced on November the 1st showed a remarkable increase, once again in the Health and Education sectors. In the budget speech, the Minister of Finance and Economic Development Dr Simba Makoni conceded that government was now under extreme pressure to deal with increased poverty levels and serious health problems. As a result, health was allocated a record \$22 billion up from \$12 billion in 2001. The Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture received \$26 070 950 000.00 whilst the Ministry of Higher Education and Technology received a record \$11,5 billion. The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare received an unprecedented \$88,8 billion for the social services sector, which is 22.8% of government's expenditure for 2002 (Budget Estimates 2002). Much of this money was also meant to assist poor students pay fees. In the 2003 budget, Education, Sport and Culture was allocated \$56,971,634,000 while Higher Education and Tertiary Education received \$14,497,248,000 (Budget Estimates 2003). Public spending is thus once again, skyrocketing in an environment of serious

economic under performance in which revenue to the exchequer is rapidly dwindling and foreign aid has disappeared.

What is clear is that the claims by the IMF and the World Bank that ESAP would lead to the improvement in the country's social and economic sectors have been proved wrong. On the contrary, poverty has worsened. Indicators of this situation are:

- I. A failing economy that is seriously constrained by the lack of investment and foreign currency.
- II. Social services that are in a state of disarray due to inadequate resources.
- III. An education sector that is experiencing hardships as a result of dwindling economic resources.
- IV. Health services that are at the point of collapse due to the lack of foreign currency needed to procure essential drugs and meet high operational costs.
- V. Above all, deliberate sabotage of government programmes by some hard core members of the former white Rhodesian government supporters, who are critical of the present government; lack of support from the International Finance Organisations and countries of the western block which are protesting against the government's agrarian reform programme.

The denial of international aid and support for Zimbabwe by the western governments and finance houses at this juncture, sprang from the fact that President Mugabe's government refused to maintain the status quo with regard to land ownership rather than the alleged violations of human rights and absence of the rule of law.

Conclusion

In conclusion, a few recommendations are worthy considering. For Example; there is need, to develop and implement local solutions to local problems if the social service reform initiative undertaken since

independence is to succeed. Perhaps ESAP should never have been implemented in its original form given the fact that its theoretical framework, assumptions and prescriptions were foreign and had already failed dismally elsewhere. **ESAP was the one drug that nearly killed the patient.** There, is however, need to liberalise the economy if economic recovery is to take place. The country needs now, more than ever before, to generate massive domestic investment. This can be achieved without compromising national sovereignty and independence. Countries like Malaysia have been able to do so. It is the only route to survival and politicians will have to develop the necessary 'acrobatics' to save the nation. Urgent measures need to be put in place by the government to restore the viability of the social services in particular, education and health, the agro-industries and the informal sectors of the economy. These are the bedrock for society's survival. There is a limit to how far white resistance to economic reform can continue to be held responsible for the country's economic misfortunes. Failure to restore public confidence in public systems and services can seriously endanger political stability. The country's development programmes will collapse if the education sector and its training institutions collapse and fail to train manpower critical for the economy. The absence of a viable health system can trigger a calamitous situation of unimaginable proportions while the collapse of the economy can spell doom for the nation. In future, serious 'surgical' analysis of externally brewed solutions to Zimbabwe's problems needs to be undertaken before the solutions are adopted or tried.

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